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MOUSLEY'S
POEMS.

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POEMS,

LYRIC AND HEROIC.

POEMS, LYRIC AND HEROIC.

BY

WILLIAM MORRIS MOUSLEY.

SIDNEY SUSSEX COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

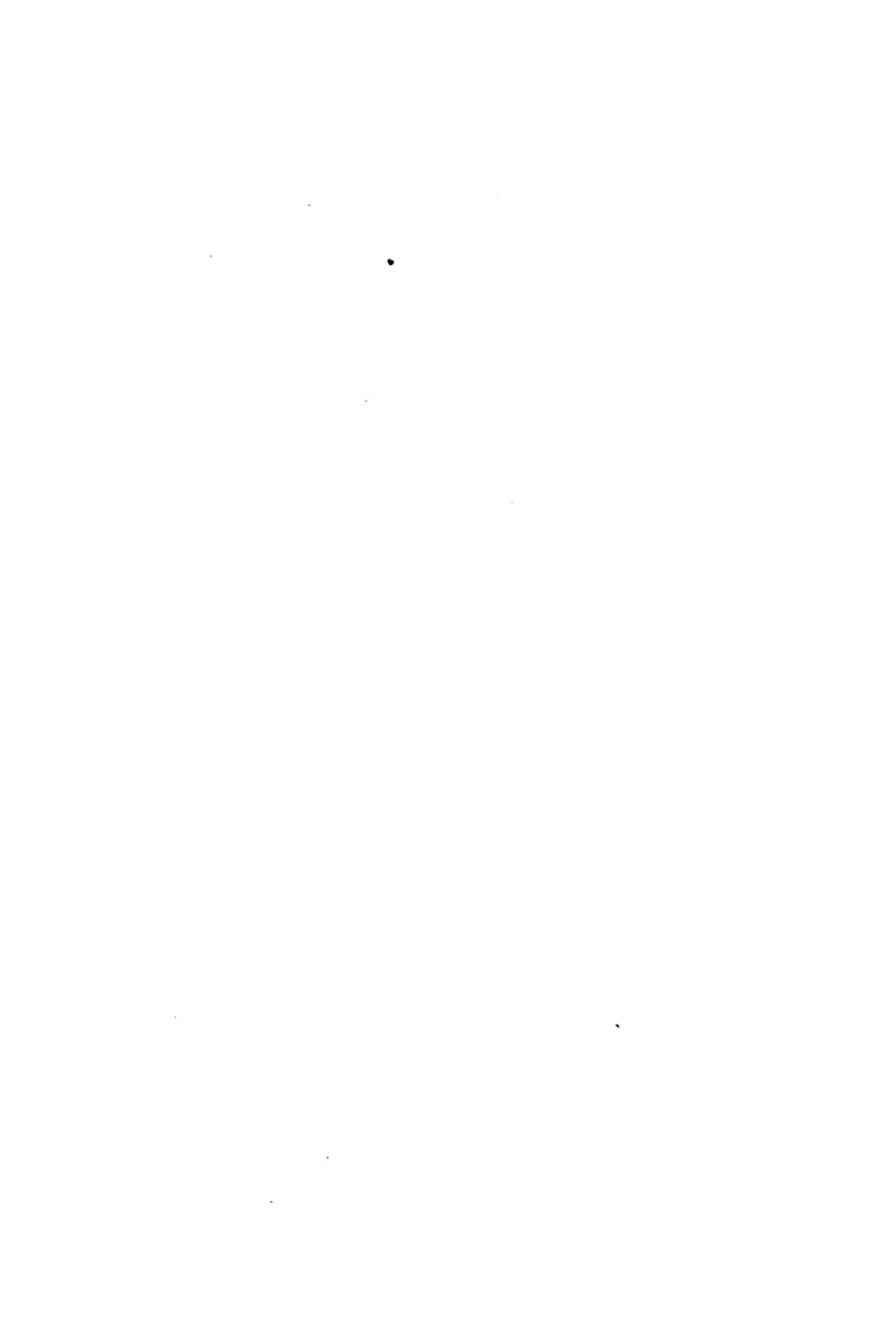


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THE following Poems were written by the Author,
an undergraduate of Cambridge, during some of
the leisure hours of a college course; and are
respectfully dedicated to those friends whose favour-
able opinion they have been fortunate enough to
obtain, and at whose request a collection of them
has been undertaken.

**SIDNEY SUSSEX COLLEGE,
CAMBRIDGE.**



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LYRICS.

STANZAS.

Hast thou ever stayed to ponder
On those strains so softly sad,
Which like seraph vespers wander
From the lips that should be glad ?
Hast thou heard the music waning,
Like the passing of a sigh ?
List—it is the low complaining
Of a love that cannot die.

Hast thou e'er, in silent sadness,
Sat entranced at evening's hour,
And recalled thy former gladness,
Known beneath love's soothing power ?

Hast thou felt the tear-drop stealing,
All unbidden from thine eye?
Then, perchance, thou know'st the feeling
Of a love that cannot die.

Hast thou seen the watch-light beaming
Fitfully across the sea?
So is love's light ever gleaming,
In life's shadowy night for me.
Wilt thou ask what fairest treasure
In the spirit-mine can lie?
Tis that sweetest—saddest—pleasure
Of a love that cannot die.

AN IMITATION FROM THE GREEK.

TO CELIA.

THE charm which made the Graces three,
Dear Celia now has flown ;
For in impartial justice they
A sister grace must own.

Or shall we say that they are now
As one, instead of three ;
For all the glories they can boast
Are centered, love, in thee.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

WHEN the changing hue of the deep night blue
O'er the water loves to play,
I sit and dream, 'neath the cool moon-beam,
Of "the land that is far away."

Of the brave and fair that wander there.
And the hearts for ever gay ;
For the smile is light, and the eye is bright,
In "the land that is far away."

By fancy dear, I still can hear
Sweet sounds in the distance stray,
The songs I love, in the air above,
From "the land that is far away."

"Tis the night-wind's sigh thro' the leaves on high.
But my heart will its charm obey,
For that voice is fraught with the tender thought
Of "the land that is far away."

Like the scent of the lime in the soft eve time,
Come those dreams of a bye-gone day,
And I live o'er again the hours that were then,
In "the land that is far away."

And when life is o'er, on that long-loved shore.
My head in the tomb they 'll lay,
In slumber deep, where my fathers sleep,
In "the land that is far away."

TO EVENING.

I.

I LOVE the whispering of the evening gale,
Fresh from the hills with life and vigour fraught ;
Its cool, calm thrill on every nerve I hail,
And scent from every leaf and wild-flower caught.
Dearest to me those melodies unbought,
The soft-toned vespers of the echoing vale,
Telling devotion's hour, when tranquil thought,
From wonted cares released, can list the tale
Which memory loves in that sweet time to tell
Of other days and other hearts once dear,
Of days long lost in time's enchaining spell,
And hearts long dead to friendship's sacred tear,
Ere iron death, with cold and tuneless tongue,
O'er life's young hopes his fatal dirges sung.

II.

O still by some belov'd—yet forced to rove
Far from her old retreats, the sylvan muse
Wakes at the silent hour of evening dews,
The music of the famed Arcadian grove.

What though the Naiad bands perchance refuse
By England's streams in choral steps to move !
Nor on her fertile hills the fancy views
The mountain home of melody and love !
Yet there are hours when, as in days of yore,
To the lone hearts that in her smile rejoice,
Nature in her own kingdom breathes the lore
Of thousand mysteries with changeful voice,
Forth from the stores that ever hidden lie—
The deep founts of her simple poetry.

A DIRGE ON THE PESTILENCE OF 1849.

A HAND of wrath is o'er us,
The blast of poison sears,
In strongest prime the lives of men,
And bathes the land in tears ;
Those that we love are falling
Beneath the withering breath,
And mortal feelingsadden
To be left behind with death.

There is a voice of wailing
That rises up on high,
“ Oh, save us or we perish ! ”
Is the burden of the cry ;
And many a knee is bending,
And many an eye is turned
To that high throne which never
Hath humble suppliant spurned.

In the lone home of the pauper,
In the cabin, and the cell,
In the dark lanes of our cities,
Where the sons of labour dwell,
Are Mercy's children stealing
With soft and voiceless tread,
And secretly they mingle
With the dying and the dead.

But their step is heard in heaven,
And their zeal for Christ shall live,
Though a cup of water only
For the sake of Him they give ;
And the angel of destruction,
Abroad on vengeance's way,
Shall hear with joy the summons,
His course of woe to stay.

A light of love is breaking
By fits amidst the gloom,
And it chases back the horrors,
That have gathered round the tomb.

Where the fatherless are weeping,
Our Father sheds his love,
And they whose homes are desolate,
Shall find a home above.

LINES ON THE FAMINE IN IRELAND IN 1847.

AH ! where has fled your wonted smile,

Ye children of the Emerald Isle ;

Why fall those glistening tears ?

A dying nation's fate ye mourn,

For rending cries of sorrow borne,

From hearts by wasting famine torn,

Swell on the tingling ears.

See, brooding o'er her fainting child,

The mother's features stern and wild,

What help lost babe for thee !

No useless shroud, no ebon pall,

Shall grace thy lonely funeral ;

Thy mother's shriek of death shall all

Thy spirit's requiem be.

The once stout arm is thin and weak—

Of pallid hue the rosy cheek,

Fraught with the woeful tale :

Low bending o'er the sombre scene,
Where late the voice of mirth has been,
Death flaps his raven wing, I ween,
Listening each passing wail.

Oh, ye who boast of plenty here,
Drop, for the sister land, a tear !
Her day of dimness lowers :
To think on one deep suffering breast,
Through thee with kindliest solace blest,
And grateful prayers for thee addressed,
Shall soothe thy lonely hours.

THE LAST SONG.

THAT strain once more,—it is the last
That e'er to me my lassie sung;
Its voice is full of pleasures past—
The music of her angel tongue.

When shall my waiting spirit hear
So rich, so soft, so sweet a strain ?
No other voice can seem as dear,
And she will never sing again.

I hear her yet, I see her still,
A shade from memory's spirit-land ;
A thousand buried feelings thrill,
And start to life at her command.

They breathe the language of decay,
The dreams and hopes that now are o'er;
They tell what Time can take away,
And what he never can restore.

THE TWO SISTERS.

A SKETCH.

THEY stood together
Beside the open oriel, and the sun
In setting splendour, as an alchemist,
Had turned the autumn foliage all to gold ;
Still calmness ruled the air, each wandering sound
Upon the ear with soft distinctness fell ;
And if the truant eve-wind played by fits,
It moaned adown the vistas of tall trees,
And 'midst their ragged trunks it died away,
As round cathedral columns float and die
The low-breathed murmurs of the vesper hymn—
It sighed, and fell upon the virgin pair
So softly, we might deem that it had stolen
The love-sighs of the hearts to them most dear,
And borne the treasured offerings to their cheeks.

Gaze on that lovely visionary brow,
That fails to hide the lovelier soul within !
For on that classic face the classic muse
Has set her seal conspicuous; and those eyes,
Serenest azure, from their lengthened fringe
Beam forth the light of spiritual fire.
Child of the Saxon race ! the proud of soul ;
Race of the deep blue een and flaxen hair !
The mystic spirit of romance I view
Enthroned in that fair forehead, nor unseen
The slumbering fires of chivalry repose.

Thine arm
Is twined around thy sister, gentle girl !
Whose face, the picture of soft confidence,
Is turned to thine in love ; meantime the rays
Of crimson evening, through thy wandering locks,
Shine mellowed on thy pale and fairy cheek.
Too fair for earthly daughters, could ye be
Stray seraphs from yon bright and burning orb,
That woos you with its beams to happier realms ?

STANZAS.

I ASKED of the wild wind where Ellen was gone.

As it restlessly mourned o'er the hill and the lea :
And its voice seemed to say, as it still wandered on,

I mourn on for ever, come mourn thou with me.

I asked of the willow that wept o'er the wave,—

Is there hope that my Ellen again I shall see ?
An answer of sorrow its rustling leaves gave,

I weep on for ever, come weep thou with me.

Is there rest for my heart, now that Ellen 's away ?

I asked of the billows that rolled to the shore ;
We think not of rest, seemed their deep sighs to say—

Sigh thou, for the rest of thy bosom is o'er.

I asked of my heart why it thought of despair,

Why it questioned the wild wind, the willow, the
main ;

But no answer of joy or of sorrow was there,

For that cold heart lay silent and broken with pain.

THE LOST ONE.

“En iterum crudelia retro
Fata vocant, conditque natantia lumina somnus.”—VIRG.

OH ! how I love, by fancy led,
To conjure up the silent dead,
 Long lost to hope and me ;
To clothe some once familiar face
With soft expression’s varying grace,
And every lineament to trace,
 From dark oblivion free.

But there was one—yet why deplore ?
The daylight of my joy was o’er
 Or e’er its noon began :
Her smiles of bliss, her love untold,
Will faithful memory ever hold,
As diamonds in her grasp of gold—
 Her fairest talisman.

My lips are cold without her kiss,
My heart forgets to think of bliss,
 The dream of love is o'er.
She sleeps upon a harder bed
Than e'er on earth she laid her head,
Nor wakens at the stranger's tread,
 As she would wake before.

There, pale with weeping for its friend,
The white rose shall in grief o'erbend
 The fresh turf, cold and green ;
And decked in garments ghostly white,
The spectre sun, that walks by night,
Shall search with dim and chilling light
 For her that once hath been.

The flowers on earth she loved the best
Are waving o'er her place of rest,
 In rural beauty's bloom ;
The sweetest bird that charms the day
Will sit and sing himself away,
And chant his softest, saddest lay,
 Above the lowly tomb.

Let home the poet's praise command,
The patriot for his fatherland
 The noblest impulse own ;
One spot beside the old yew tree,
My home—my country—both shall be,
Where still my lost one sleeps for me,
 Beneath the churchyard stone.

JESSIE AND RICHARD.

A BALLAD.

I SAW her on Clanderra's steep,
Where the clustering heathbell grew ;
Her father there was tending sheep,
And she was fair to view.

Over the mountain side she roved,
Her step was free and wild,
Her ringing laugh the echoes loved,
For she was Nature's child.

The praises of her eyes so fair
The village lads would sing ;
The rose in summer decked her hair,
The snowdrop in the spring.

And bright was favoured Richard's glance,
At merry eve I ween,
When, labour o'er, he rose to dance
With Jessie on the green.

How beat his heart when first he dared
To talk to her of love,
And when at last his arm she shared
Adown the beechen grove.

And smilingly the days went by,
Swiftly the moments passed ;
How sad to think so fair a sky
Must soon be overcast.

But Jessie's heart had grief in store,
All sudden and unseen—
She saw her lover's face no more
Upon the village green.

Yes, he was gone, another's kiss
Had stolen love away,
And Jessie's brightest hope of bliss
Was melted in decay.

The prize of Richard's double heart
Ill-fated Marion won,
For of a father's wealth she 'd part,—
But Jessie, she had none.

Unlike the tale of Danae's tower
Which ancient poets sang,
Love drooped beneath the golden shower,
And died without a pang.

Could Heaven on such a union smile,
Or bless that wedded pair ?
No ! Jealousy with artful wile,
Sowed his dissensions there.

And Richard, how he wished the chance
To be as he had been,
Life's fairest hope he 'd give to dance
With Jessie on the green.

When she the cruel tidings knew,
She cried the live-long day ;
And to the beechen grove she flew,
Alone to weep and pray.

Oft did she think of him she loved,
With mingled grief and pride :
How different life for him had been,
Had Jessie been his bride !

I saw her on Clanderra's steep,
Her lightsome laugh was o'er ;
Her brow, unused to musings deep,
The shades of sorrow wore.

Her soul no joy in earth could find,
She fixed her gaze above ;
The light clouds passed before the wind,
So passed her dream of love.

TO —————

WHEN eve has shed her golden light
On the forest, vale, and glen,
We've gazed, as if a scene so bright
We ne'er could view again.

With each fair tint the landscape wore,
We've stood and sighed to part,
And oft were left, the vision o'er,
In loneliness of heart.

So on the sunlight of thy brow
I would have gazed for ever ;
But lonely is my spirit now,
Alas ! for we must sever.

The glories of the kindled west
Shall other eves renew,
But I am with no morrow blest,
That brings the sight of you.

No sight of that celestial cheek,
Those eyes so brightly fond ;
Ah ! I must ever vainly seek
To break our spirit bond.

Farewell to thee—but not to love,—
One lingering last adieu !
A wintry lot though mine may prove,
May summer reign with you.

THE LOVED OF OTHER DAYS.

WHEN summer's softest sun has set,
And eve her purple pall displays,
How oft I dwell in vain regret
On her I loved in other days.

I think upon her classic head,
The eyes on which I used to gaze,
But all save memory long has fled
Of her I loved in other days.

Dear, then, to me the harp's soft tone,
Whose murmurs breathed her fav'rite lays,
But music's charms for me are gone
With her I loved in other days.

Earth's varied glories brightly seen,
I used with fervent heart to praise,
But seldom prize I them, I ween.
As once I did in other days.

The gems which hang on Nature's brow
Shone then in pure affection's rays,
But clouds of sorrow linger now,
For her I loved in other days.

MADRIGAL.

By the ever-flowing streamlet,
By the ever-waving tree,
In the valley of the thousand flowers,
Come and wander, love, with me!

I pray thee by the fays that make
The bluebell cups their home,
By their tiny laugh amidst the grove,
Arise, my fair, and come !

I pray thee by the charms that mark
Yon lovely, fragrant dell,
Which wanteth but thy radiant eye,
To form its perfect spell.

By the rose-light on the waters,
Which the evening sun has shed ;
By the fiery cloud that lingers
Above his fiery head.

By the top boughs of the forest,
Where his last beams love to play,
And his light upon the village spire,
Before he sinks away.

By those eastern fairy castles,
Which the clouds have hung in air ;
And the ridge on ridge of mountains,
Which start to being there.

By the glittering dew beneath us—
By the music of the vale,
The rich notes of the wood-dove,
And the plaintive nightingale.

To its mate that bird is telling
Soft tales within the tree ;
And my heart is beating high, love,
Such tales to tell to thee.

SONG.

FAIR one, take those flowers away,
Thy beauty's light consuming ;
Thy forehead shames the lily's ray,
Thy cheeks the rose's blooming.
Nay, start not in such feigned alarm—
I never yet have found thee,
With aught that added to the charm
That love has thrown around thee.

The diamonds in thy ringlets shine
With less than wonted splendour,
Beside those sparkling eyes of thine,
Golconda's gems surrender ;
My fair, for less of good than harm
That shining wreath has bound thee,
Thou canst not have a fairer charm
Than love has thrown around thee.

As feel the light leaves on the trees,
The Zephyr's breath at morning,
So let thy tresses float at ease,
With Nature's own adorning ;
Love's cheering smile, love's spirit calm,
In fairy spells have wound thee,
Then sigh not for a brighter charm
Than love has thrown around thee.

CANZONE.

Oh, say not I could leave thee,
And that life would not be pain,
Or that if my lips deceive thee,
Those lips could smile again !
Nor say a jewel rarer,
A dearer or a fairer,
My wandering eye could find ;
I should go the wide earth over,
And still remain the lover
Of her I left behind.

The world will come before me,
And softly she will spread
Enchantments ever o'er me,
But her charms for me are dead.
Her smiles I will regret not ;
And if thou forget not,
What is her frown to me ?

My praise is thy caressing,
My talisman thy blessing,
My world thy heart shall be.

And like the flower that liveth,
Unknown while daylight glows,
But sweetest perfume giveth,
When evening's shadows close ;
So, when gone are worldly pleasures,
Thy heart shall shed its treasures
In sorrow's lonely shade ;
And I'll sit and gaze upon thee,
With thy bloom of beauty on thee,
As a flower that will not fade.

STANZAS.

I.

I **MUST** sit and sigh now, for the farewell is spoken,
Thou hast left me, alas ! in my sadness to pine ;
Farewell to thee now, but the chain is unbroken,
That binds thy sweet soul in communion with mine.
Thou wilt speak to me yet in the starlight of heaven,
In the voice of the brook by the zephyr winds driven,
And with all the bright charms to this lower world given,
Thine image will mingle its beauty divine.

II.

In the tear, I shall see thee, that rises at sorrow ;
In the lone flower that lies on the chill winter's breast,
Thy light shall the angel of memory borrow,
And fold his soft wing in thy presence to rest.
Not long has my heart from that presence been parted,
Not long has it stayed with the proud and cold hearted,
But away on the pinions of fancy has darted,
And in the calm light of thy beauty been blest.

LINES TO -----

ERE I can view thy beauty's glow,
As love could wish it seen,
Must cruel distance cease to throw
Its shadowy veil between.

Such far-off gaze as this must fail
My raptured thoughts to prove,
But lip to lip must tell the tale,
And whispers murmur love.

THE ROSE OF ELLA.

I saw the rose by Ella's side
 Wave over the bonnie water,
And by it, a listening the lark at eve,—
 Fair Ellen, the gudeman's daughter.
I envied the river that viewed her oft,
 And the winds that played with her hair,
And the lover that kissed those cheeks so soft,
 So often as kiss he dare.

By Ella's bank she wandered alone,
 A garland of May was on her,
She shook off the dew with her tripping feet.
 The moon smiled down upon her ;
The spirits of evening sighed thro' the trees
 Their love for her gentle face,
And the lazy echoes heard not the voice
 Of her feet in that lonely place.

And love only knew why Ellen was there,
And one whom love had told it ;
He leant—gazing oft at a lock of hair,
And to his breast would fold it ;
He watched the sky till the evening star
Rose over the red beech tree,—
“ She comes,” he said, “ by that sign I know,
The girl of my love to me.”

And blessed was he, for the rose of life,
And a thornless rose, he found her ;
The moon could not silver the blush of her cheek,
When her lover’s arm was round her.
And oft when I hear of noble maids,
Of many a highborn daughter,
I think upon Ellen a listening the lark,
By the side of the bonnie water.

TO A STREAM.

SWEET stream as, on thy placid breast,
The mirrored skies I view,
So may my heart, in tranquil rest,
Reflect some glories too.

Thine impulse to the briny tide,
By hands unseen is given,
So may a gracious influence guide
My onward path to heaven.

And when life's stream its course shall end,
May it as waveless be,
And calmly, as thy waters, blend
With the eternal sea.

LOVE'S EVENING STAR.

WE trod youth's pathway side by side,
Call us but friends, we were no more,
But ere that sweet delusion died,
 The quiet of my heart was o'er :
That friendship waned as wanes the day, .
 Its ling'ring twilight played above,
When rose a star of softer ray,
 It was the evening star of love.

It viewed us like a seraph's eye,
 It smiled upon our tales of bliss,
No favouring hour with that could vie,
 Its memory lends a light to this.
When beats the pulse of fond regret
 For bygone visions seen afar,
I love to stand when day has set,
 And gaze upon the evening star.

Oft in the melancholy hour,
I feel the influence of that scene,
Not as of old its thrilling power,
 But pensive, soothing, and serene.
Go thou, when passions vex thy heart,
 When ruffling storms thy bosom move,
Go share the peace such scenes impart,
 And gaze upon the star of love.

LINES FOR CHRISTMAS.

THE yule block now is burning bright in England's
joyful halls;
It warms the mansions of the rich, and the cotter's
humble walls.
The distant ones are gathering, the children and the
sire,
And kindred hearts are meeting now, around the
Christmas fire.

How every face is lit with smiles beneath the cheerful
blaze,
And eyes that plainly speak delight, on others' fondly
gaze;
The old, the young, the grave, the gay, the kindest
joys inspire,
And every sorrow thaws away beside the Christmas
fire.

While, as our pleasure is to muse on that which once
hath been,

The recollections of the past shall consecrate the scene :
The lost ones seem to live again, and take, at our de-
sire,

The seats where they were wont to sit, beside the
Christmas fire.

And we will wish the health of those that from here
are far away :

They are thinking now on us perhaps, and the holy
festa 1 day.

In foreign regions, wanderers, or tossed in perils dire,
They vainly wish to be with us beside the Christmas
fire.

But yet to think, while gazing round on those so happy
now,

What fate the future has for us, might cloud the
thoughtful brow,

And teach us with united voice to join in one desire :
That we may live to meet around another Christmas
fire.

THE FAIRER WORLD ABOVE.

I KNOW of a fair country that is far away from here,
'T is the home of blessed spirits, 't is the land without a
tear.

Far brighter than the utmost praise that human tongue
can give

Are the happy souls that wander there, and in that
country live.

They smile upon the rough road, that in hope they
lately trod,

And their song is of the mercies of an ever-loving God.
And blessed are those spirits now, and no longer think
of care,

For hope is lost in happiness, and God himself is there.
'T is not the sun that lights them now, nor the stars they
used to love.

For the glory of the Lamb illumines "that fairer world
above."

Who are those souls? on earth I know the heavy cross
they bore!

But Zionward their eyes were set, to the heavenly Ca-
naan's shore.

Who are those souls?—I saw them toil along the rug-
ged way,

And for nought that earth could offer them, would they
a moment stay;

Their staff was hope, their guide the word, their light
a Saviour's love,

They saw beyond the dreary vale “a fairer world above.”

And when they went away from here, we mourned above
the tomb,

For death to us was wrapt in doubt, the grave was
wrapt in gloom.

We thought not, when we saw the tears from their
drooping eyelids flow,

That their course was that supremest joy the world can
never know;

Nor felt we what the Scriptures say to those with grief
opprest.—

Weep but a little for the dead, for he is gone to rest;

Their parting smile we cherish yet, they looked on us in
love,
And their souls were called to other realms, “ the fairer
world above.”

So may we like the righteous live, so like the righteous
die :
May seraphs wave their golden wings, and waft us up
on high !
There shall sweet spirits welcome us to never-fading
bliss,
And we shall meet in that dear land the souls we loved
in this ;
With voiceless step we'll wander o'er the arches of the
sky,
And tread with them those boundless courts that never
heard a sigh ;
They will teach us how to tune our harps to Jesu's
dying love,
And to sing with them the blissful songs of “ the fairer
world above.”

SACRED LINES.

HAIL to the day whose glorious morn
Our freedom on its wing shall bear ;—
Earth's ransomed sons, to heaven up-borne,
Shall blood-bought crowns of glory wear.

Deep in the bosom of the sky
Shall rise the kingdom of the blest ;
There safely shall the weary fly,
And world-worn spirits find a rest.

Saviour !—if aught of earth's alloy
My soul beyond the grave retain,
Its power shall yield to thrilling joy,
Nor dare disturb my peace again.

As when the pensive prisoners see
The sunlight in their dungeon cell,
And dream of all the fair and free
That 'neath his kindly influence dwell :

So oft on yonder skyey dome
My soul will fix her longing view,
And feign her everlasting home,
In those bright realms of heavenly blue.

But how shall mortal eye presume
The vision of that world to dare?—
FAITH lifts its gaze beyond the tomb,
And points to many mansions there:

And loves the wondering soul to teach
That, though unknown the trackless road,
The simplest prayer can surely reach,
By Christ, that yet unreach'd abode.

"THE REALMS OF REST."

Tired with the world's unceasing jar,
The weary brow, the anxious breast,
Beneath the silent vesper star,
I love to leave that world afar,
And think upon "the realms of rest."

I love the fiery orb to see
Slow sinking in the kindled west;
He seems to brighter realms to flee,
Oh! would that I with him might be
A pilgrim to "the realms of rest."

Man lives for nought but sorrow here,
His hopes a shade, his days unblest,
And if one ray of pleasure cheer,
'T is when he looks with stifled tear
On, on into "the realms of rest."

When friends in Christ are called to die,
'T is true they leave my heart opprest;
But on the wings of thought I fly,
And follow with an aching eye
Their souls into "the realms of rest."

And when, to quit this social clay,
Death's summons strikes my waiting breast,
A smile upon my lips shall play,
I 'll cast the cords of earth away,
And join them in "the realms of rest."

A DEATH SCENE.

His eye was fixed
Serenely, and a light unwonted there
Shone with mild lustre, and his smooth, calm brow
Told of deep thought, and ever and anon
Came a sweet smile upon his parted lips
As he did gaze upon us ; and whene'er
The sound of half-checked sigh, or stifled sob,
From us would fall unwittingly, his look
Seemed half reproach ; but it was swiftly gone,
As if such feeling with that countenance
Had parted then for ever. He did call us,
And when we scarce could see him for our tears,
He grasped our hands, and while his lips were formed
To say, " God bless ye," they grew mute in death,
And he was gone for ever,—seraphs called
His spirit to the kingdom of the Lamb ;
Oh, what is death if this it be to die !

A SCANDINAVIAN LEGEND.

THE ancient mythology of the Scandinavian inhabitants of the north of Europe contains many episodes of varied poetic interest. The subject of the following legend is taken from the prose *Edda*, a collection of the writings of the sealds or bards of those nations, in the old Norse dialect.

LAND of the chilling blast, and icy stream,
Gigantic heroes, and wild fancy's dream,
Stern Scandinavia!—though thy age is past,
Thy deeds in form of shadowy fables last.
Far in the annals of thy ancient clime,
When gods were viewed in nature's works sublime,
Where brightly spreads her heaven-encircling form,
Iris, the sister of the sunlit storm,
Where down the sky her radiant columns bend,
And bathed in mist in distant lands descend,
By sages taught, the northern sons of war
From earth to heaven a spangled pathway saw.

There Odin* reigned supreme ! and round his throne
A host of other powers in lustre shone.
There wrapt in light, the fairest of the skies,
Like the noon sun, Breidablik's halls arise.
Viewed in the splendour of their virgin beam,
Its silver walls, its golden pillars gleam ;
And on its fiery shafts, as Scalders tell,
Were Runic charms engraved, whose fancied spell
Could woo the spirit back to robes of clay,
And bear from Death's cold grasp his icy prey.
In those proud halls, with high and noble mien,
Ruled Baldur, favourite of the Mother Queen,†
Brighter than silver's rays, than gold refined,
Shone he, the hero of the noble mind ;
His godlike voice in councils deep was raised—
When Baldur‡ spoke the listening *Æsir*§ praised.

* Odin, the supreme deity of the Teutonic nations, called by the Saxons Woden ; hence our Wodensday (Wednesday).—MALLER'S *Northern Antiquities*.

† Frigga, the chief of the goddesses.—Prose *Edda*.

‡ Baldur, in Mr. Magnusen's opinion, is the summer light in the merry month of May, when the sun is advancing to his meridian, and all nature teems with joy and beauty.—SMITH'S *Voluspa*.

§ The conclave of the gods.

As moon-beams glittering on the ocean's foam,
So white the locks that o'er his forehead roam ;
Or his own flower, the lily of the vale,
That scents with spicy breath the evening gale.
The lovely Nanna wandered by his side,
Wrapt in her husband's mind, her only pride ;
And as the eye, that on the sun would dare
To fix its gaze, must find his semblance there,
So Nanna's eyes on Baldur's beauty dwelt,
And ling'ring still the heavenly image felt.

There is a vision of the ardent soul,
When its proud elements have burst control,
And yielded to the bright mysterious powers,
That chain in golden bands these hearts of ours :
Beauteous and undefined, of boundless scope,
The dream of Fancy in the sleep of Hope,
When o'er the wide world of the teeming brain,
The thoughts of care and watchfulness and pain,
Like noontide's fiercer rays have ceased to glow,
And floods of spectral light arise and flow,
Pure from the founts of Memory and Love,

As moonlight stealing from the vaults above ;
We feel the rising thought unfelt before,
The infinite expands its hidden lore,
An infinite of Beauty or of Bliss,
The mingling of a brighter world with this ;
So fair a dream must Baldur's legend be,
Across the brain of northern chivalry.—

'T is midnight deep ! ill-omened spirits rise,
And break the hero's rest with 'boding cries,
Hoarse as the raven's croak, the wild wind's roll,
Or demon brooding o'er the sinful soul ;
Such forms of ill the nightly terrors wear,
And death's approach with chilling aspect bear ;
O'erwhelmed with dread th' assembled conclave hear
From Baldur's lips the fatal cause of fear.
Then shouts for rescue through the council ran,
And each with eager haste devised a plan ;
Despairing eyes his doubtful fate bewail,
Till fired by love a mother's thoughts prevail ;
Her word suggestive all the hosts abide,
And to her willing hands the charge confide.

O'er earth's wide bounds the fearful goddess flew,
No rest, no peace, her weary eyelids knew,
The tale of woe her voice persuasive poured,
And when that voice was still, her eyes implored ;
One general oath the realms of Nature sware,
One oath of love, 'twas Baldur's life to spare, .
And rank, by rank, the ministers of death,
Gave forth the promise with accordant breath.

Up rose the *Æsir*, freed from past alarm ;
With sword and spear, to test the potent charm,
Erect he stood, and, conscious of his power,
Smiled on the brandished steel and missile shower ;
Around his head the torrent harmless broke,
As storms upon the forest's monarch oak ;
The javelin, aimed as in the deadly strife,
True to its oath, forgot its thirst for life,
And as his form each stingless arrow grazed,
A shout of wild delight the *Æsir* raised.—
A sacred plant beside Valhalla grew,
And round a fostering trunk its tendrils threw,
As love is wont around that heart to cling,

From which it feels its source of being spring;
No oath it gave, its fair and fragile form
Waved to the evening wind, and feared the storm,
Nor Frigga thought the mistletoe could be
Armed with the hidden power of destiny.
This Loki knew, the genius of ill,
And dreams of murderous hate his bosom fill ;
Stung with a rival's praise, his flashing eyes
Sought out, and swiftly found the deadly prize ;
He gained the spot where Baldur's brother stood—
Hodur the blind, in dark and pensive mood,
And with dissembling zeal essayed to guide
The charmless arrow to his brother's side.
It flew !—the message of untimely fate
Hurled by the force of Loki's quenchless hate—
And Baldur fell ! Hark to that thrilling sound
Of mingled grief, and rage, that gathers round !
He fell !—his eye, yet eloquent in death,
Looked kindness on the hand that stole his breath ;
With languid throb, the quivering pulse of life
A moment wrestled in unequal strife ;
As if the spirit stayed to bid farewell
To that fair home where it must cease to dwell,

Then sank o'erwhelmed as sinks the summer's day,
So calmly bright that spirit passed away.

Deep was the gloom of Hela's* dread domain,
And sorrow triumphed in her Halls of Pain ;
There pale and shadowy forms, with ceaseless tread,
Paced the cold regions of the lonely dead,
And menial bands, grim Care, and Famine lean,
Hung on the footfall of the Tyrant Queen.
There Baldur, too, with solemn steps of woe,
Trod the dim mazes of the realms below,
And lone in heart, 'midst spectral hosts unmoved,
Mourned the reft pleasures of the world he loved ;
Yet, tho' entombed in regions of despair,
Hope had not ceased her lingering smile to wear,
By Hela's vow he still might quit the gloom,
Should earth and heav'n with tears lament his doom.

Such the decree ! and from her throne above
Came Nanna hastening to the task of love ;
One gentle tear, as pity's offering shed,

* To the realms of the goddess Hela went, after death, the souls of such as died by accident or disease, and were not slain in battle.

From all she sought—the ransom of the dead.
And Nature wept! for drops of pearly dew
O'er leaves and flowers sprung tear-like to her view;
Such drops as deck the thirsty summer's morn
On the long grass, as silken lashes, borne,
When Earth her sun laments, till orient rays
Kiss them away, and meet her longing gaze.
The distant moaning of the zephyr's sigh
Breathed solemn dirges through the vaulted sky,
Not like the night-howl of the startled blast,
But soft as though *Æolian* music passed;
Or those sweet sounds that oft at eventide,
In the deep caverns of the heaven abide,
Which fancy well might deem an angel's flight,
With gently waving wing through realms of light.
With cries of woe Valhalla's halls were filled,
Their wonted sounds,—the warrior's shouts—were
stilled;
And they too wept—the fatal sisters three,
Beside the ash,* earth's broad primeval tree:

* The ash, *Yggdrasill*, was the greatest and best of all trees, and was supposed to extend its branches over the whole earth;

First she, the noble maid, whose piercing eye
Dwelt on the mysteries of futurity,
With sudden start repressed her anxious gaze,
Scared by the omens of the coming days ;
And the gay girl who held, with secret power,
The gliding footsteps of the passing hour,
E'en she awhile with eyes averted stood,
And checked with hasty sigh her thoughtless mood ;
She, too—the genius of the vanished past,
The long dark records from her fingers cast,
Upraised her gloomy brow, and, filled with fear,
Forgot the days to thoughtful Memory dear.
And fell Disease her course a moment stayed,
A moment listened as the suppliant prayed,
Lowered the dread bow, whose noxious arrows bear
Death's fearful message through the poisoned air,
And pity touched that heart unused to know
A pang of sorrow for another's woe,
The stealing tear-drop from her eye she chased,

beneath it dwelt the Norns, who fixed the lifetime of men, and
were called Urd, Vernandi, and Skuld, or Present, Past, and
Future.—Prose *Edda*.



Upon her breast her hand of terror placed,
Then gave her pinions to the breeze's play,
And cleft through azure realms her murderous way.

Lo ! in her path and by the wayside stone,
With eyes of scornful fire—a haggard crone !
In vain, in vain for tears of love she calls ;
On Nanna's ears her answer harshly falls,
“No tear of mine shall quench the funeral pyre,
“My love is parching hate, my sorrow ire,
“No joy of mine can sons of earth fulfil,
“Let him that Hela holds be Hela's still.”—
'T was Loki's voice—Hope's sun is sinking low,
Its beams in Nanna's heav'n have ceased to glow,
And on her crystal tears to rest refuse,
Or gild those mournful drops with rainbow hues ;
While, as she watched its last expiring ray,
To clouds of sorrow yield, and melt away,
And felt upon her cheek eve's chilly air—
Eve of a starless night of fell despair—
One shriek she gave—one ringing cry of pain,
And echo feared to mock the harrowing strain.

Through heaven's high vault a murmuring sound
has gone
Of thousand voices raised in unison,
And densely waving crowds, a countless quire,
Swell the loud wail beside the funeral fire ;*
With flashing arms they decked the warrior dead,
And by his side his battle charger led ;
A crested helm the pallid forehead wore,
The cold stiff hand a gleaming falchion bore ;
While as the corpse upon the pile they laid,
The red flame on his features wildly played,
As if those cheeks were moved with sudden strife,
The swiftly gushing flow of coming life ;
And Nanna stooped, as though she seemed to gaze
Upon the cherished smile of other days.
And, 'tranced in thought, as o'er the corpse she hung,

* Under the figure of the burning of Baldur, the burning up of nature by the sun in July and August is typified, and the feast of the burning was celebrated by the Northmen as their greatest and most solemn festival. This ceremony was changed by the Roman Papacy into one in honour of John the Baptist, and one of the flowers sacred to Baldur (the *Hypericum perforatum*) was consecrated afresh as St. John's wort.

Low wailing notes poured falt'ring from her tongue :

“ The maids of Odin marked him not to die,
“ His parting breath swelled not the battle-cry,
“ No victor’s plume, no wreath bedecked his brow,
“ His haughty sword laid not the foeman low ;
“ He fell not there as Virtue’s champion falls,
“ Nor walks with joy Valhalla’s shield-roofcd halls ;
“ But he is gone, from wife, from kindred borne,
“ To Hela’s cold abode, a shade forlorn ;
“ Thither to him my spirit longs to fly ;
“ Living with him, I lived—and dying, die.”

Her form she bent so lowly in despair,
The bale-fire mingled with her flowing hair,
Her pale white arm around his neck she threw,
Nor heeded that the bright flame wildly flew ;
And when her cheek had felt its burning breath,
And on her frame was laid the grasp of death,
More closely still she clung to that loved clay,
And breathed in kisses soft her soul away.

THE LAST DAYS OF SALEM.

No more thy templed grandeur, Italy !
Hangs like a happy dream, and haunts my soul
In the still hours of thought ; nor ruined Greece
Pleads with a classic voice for memory's tear ;—
No ; but how oft, when eve has hushed the world,
And stilled its sterner cares, my spirit wings
To that forgotten land, whose ancient fame
Breathes with sublimest wonders ; still to me
The shades of former glories yet enwrap
Thy melancholy beauties, Palestine !
Gone are thy days of song ! a stranger's hand
That harp, with faltering touch, would sweep, whose
chords
Have slumbered long untuned, but with whose sound
The olden age was vocal ; murmur still
The never-dying echoes ; still I hear,
By the lone stream of Kishon, on the heights
Of fruitful Carmel, on unreckoned hills,

In glens, and dewy vales, and cedar groves,
More than Orphean melody; nor erst
The lute-flute whispered on Arcadian fields
Songs sweet as Zion heard from her loved king,
The minstrel shepherd; or as Bethlehem, thou,
Thrice-honoured! when the heavenly seraphs sung
Above thy midnight plains the chant of peace.

Thy pride is in the past—thy sun has set
O'er time's blue waves; but still thy evening brings
Some memory of the glorious day that's gone.
Go! climb the height of Olivet, and gaze
Where in her rest of ruin Zion sleeps,
How beautiful, yet desolate;—her sons,
Children of blighted hope, but high intent,
Round her pale streets and faded glories mourn
In unavailing dirges*—gaze and weep!
For o'er her coming fall the Godhead wept,
And the sealed mysteries of years unborn

* The Karaite Jews have a liturgy in which are particular laments or chants, in one of which every response of the people is in these words, "We sit down alone and weep."

Told with prophetic voice, and pity filled
The eye of Heaven with sorrow, as His look,
Like the last glance on the beloved dead.
Around the thankless city deeply fell.

Rome calls her hosts ! unrivalled queen she sits,
And, from the summits of her seven famed hills,
Surveys a conquered world ! Far, far extends
O'er earth, o'er ocean, isle, and continent,
Her thirsting glance. Germania's* sons in vain,
Behind their Alpine barrier, shun her gaze ;
Round the far isles the western billows sweep
In vain their ceaseless surge ; and Albion's shore
Betrays its painted sons. The Teuton † knew
No shelter from inhospitable sky,
And on Rhinæan snow the legion'd ranks
Leave their impress ; far in the scorching south,
O'er Lybian sands, their soaring eagle dares

* Germania is particularized as being the principal country, though not the immediate one, beyond the Alps.

† Allusion is made to the victories of Marius over the Cimbri and Teutones.

The zenith sun ; now, in its eastward flight,
By wind, by wave, uncheck'd, the impious bird
Swoops o'er the holy heights of Judah's hills.

War wakes those silent hills with trumpet tones,
And voices hoarse for carnage ; bounding hearts
Leap at the sounds, and from their scabbards fly
Long-idle swords, for Roman legions tread
Their vine-clad fields with proud, oppressive step.
Spring the tall bulwarks ! rise th' embattled towers !
Wave the broad pennons from the citadels !
Nor in thy forts and turrets sleepest thou,
“ City of peace !” for by thy walls array'd
Stand the beleaguering forces ; ill attunes
To the calm beauty of thy verdant vales
The western warrior's music. Soft the hour !
The flush of eve rests on the groves of palms,
And the dusk olive rears its shadowy form
'Gainst the declining orb ; rich hues of red
Brighten the thousand tints, e'en bright before,
Rich as those golden clouds that softly float,
Like spirits, on the azure field of heaven.

Deep blush the roses of the vale, and weep
In tears of brightest dew, for wayward winds
Their richest scents had stolen ; all the air
Rings with the vesper songs of tuneful birds,
And in the arms of loveliest twilight sinks
The eastern day. Screen'd by the shades of night.
Up Akra's steep, the Roman lines to view,
Press anxious-hearted crowds. Lo ! o'er the vale
Is spread a sea of bronze, and burnish'd helms,
Like rippling waves, flash with the imag'd moon !
Hark to the muffled sounds of marching men,
Borne on the night air ; and the circling step
Of cohorts trampling lone Jehoshaphat !
Fast by the stream of Kedron spread their ranks,
And by the gate where dying Stephen gained
A protomartyr's glory ; upward come
Sounds of the creek of wheels ; the labouring rams
Groan up the heights, and with impatient throat
Ausonia's eagle shrieks for Jewish blood !

Black o'er the fated towers of Zion hang
The midnight clouds, whose darkness but involves



The darker woe within. There stalk at will
The fiends of cloven discord, and the train
Of jarring passions, loosed by deep despair.
Fires in the heaven glow ;* the sounds of wrath
Roll through the high concave ; and wandering stars,
As swords of vengeance, blaze along the sky !
Stern in his purple clamys, lo ! the son
Of the all-conquering Cæsars stands aloof,
And, with a victor's eye, on Salem's towers
Fixes his gaze. And whence that knitted brow,
And face of awful wonder ? Lo ! on high,
From the deep cavern of those riven clouds,
Streams the white flood of moonlight, glancing down
Full on Jehovah's fane ! The Roman paused,
As if some lingering vision of his soul—
Some dream of ardent fancy—or the thought
Of his Olympus realized on earth—
Scared his proud mind ; so palely shone,

* "There shall be fearful sights and great signs from heaven." (Luke xxi. 11.) For the account of the fulfilment of this prophecy, see Josephus de Bell. Jud., lib. vi., cap. 5, sect. 3; also Tacitus Hist., lib. v.

As evening stars, its golden pinnacles,
And the mild lustre of its marble walls
So little had of earth, so much of heaven.

O'er Salem's streets the shades of misery brood,
And pallid forms, like spectres of the night,
Glide through the voiceless halls ; and on the ear
Fall faintly whisper'd sighs of those who breathe
The requiem of their hopes ; for hand in hand
Pale famine stalks with death, and sets his seal
On many a noble brow and iron frame,
And many a maiden's eye, once beaming bright,
Now lovely still in sorrow's chastened shade,
With waning light shines sadly beautiful,
And Salem's daughters weep their country's fall.

Onward they sweep—the mail-clad sons of Rome,
And as a subtle fire with burning course
Steals step by step upon the homes of man,
So through each wall and rampart win their way,
Those ruthless sons of war. Nor Judah's ranks
Less strain each nerve, and when their flagging hopes
Sink in their breasts, their upward glance beholds

The Temple—once the Godhead's sacred seat !
And at the sight, fresh courage bounding o'er
Their drooping limbs and hearts, with martial strength
Invigorates, as when Antœus erst,
In the eventful strife of giant limbs,
Wreathed with Alcmaena's son, from earth received
Strength for the arduous fight at every fall.
The sun in heaven blushed red, and hastened down
His fiery footed course ; and shuddering night
Trod the dark sky !—Not as that night of yore,
When on the Assyrian host the hand of God
Spread the death calm—but heaven indignant pours
On Zion's self the merit of her crimes ;
Vengeance on high the glittering sabre waves,
And, with the deep voice of a hurricane
Loosed on the torrid clime, the storm of wrath
Sweeps her away beneath its deluge roll !

Unwept they fell ! no pity mourned the dead !
No sympathy, with seraph wings outstretched,
Sheltered the homeless sons ! That scorned race,
Unloved, unblessed, upon a stormy world,

Without the smile of a forgiving Heaven,
Took their rough way—one earnest glance they threw,
Where 'neath the smouldering piles of Zion's towers
Lay their deep-buried hopes in dreamless sleep.
Proud day of human victory, the mead
Of kindliest feelings wounded, and the ties
Of our humanity an incense given
To feed fame's altar fire !—Oh ! who would sigh
To wear a victor's laurels, from the dust
Of ruined cities sprung ? whose rising germs
The widow's tear-drops moisten, and whose leaves
Wave to the orphan's sighs. And where is Rome ?
Go, seek her in the annals of the past !
Seek her in trampled state and pillaged town ;
There, by the dust of ages uneffaced,
In blood her name is written ; at the call,
Lo ! rising as the spirits of the dead,
Stand Veii—Carthage—widowed Salem forth.
Call the oppress, the scorned of many tongues,
The stern lone-hearted wanderers of earth,
And thou wilt hear, as in the night-wind's sigh,
The answer of their deep and restless voice.

Child of the aching heart thou canst invite
Our search amidst the memories of the dead—
Thy prophet's lore—the wisdom of thy kings ;
Immortal these—and more than mortal thou !

There is a flush upon the eastern sky !
The twilight of eternity unfolds
Its dawning rays—far brighter vision's beam,
And Israel's harp no more shall idly rest
Hung on the willows, nor its golden strings
But murmur sadly to the passing wind.
Then—but my longing spirit fails to tell
That day's celestial glory !—sweeter strains
Than poet ever dreamed or minstrel sung,
'Through thy broad coasts shall echo, " land of peace !'"
And thy delighted fields once more shall give
Response to heavenly melodies !—thy hills
Bloom with ten thousand glories, charmed with sounds
Hymned to Messiah's name !—thy arid brooks
Gush with repentant tears and murmur praise !
Fair as the rose thy blighted deserts shine,
And own their sweetest name, " Immanuel's land."

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ANITA E. EDMOND



